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THE KENTUCKY WARBLER



Nest of SONG SPARROW at Audubon State Park, Henderson

Found by King Benson, June 27, 1951

See KENTUCKY WARBLER, 27 (1951), p. 63

Vol. 28 No. 2

May 1952

THE KENTUCKY ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Founded in 1923 by

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All members are urged to send notes, articles, news items, or other material for publication to one of the editors.

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MIGRATION DATA FROM EASTERN KENTUCKY

ROGER W. BARBOUR, Department of Zoology,
University of Kentucky

From 1933 to 1939 Dr. Wilfred A. Welter and his associates at Morehead State College studied the vertebrate fauna of Rowan and adjacent counties in eastern Kentucky. In 1939, before a paper on the birds of the area was completed, Dr. Welter met an untimely death in an automobile accident. I have added my own records to those accumulated by him and have prepared two papers on the birds of the area. The first (Barbour, 1951) is an annotated list of the summer birds of the area; the present paper deals only with the transients and winter residents. The area studied included the counties of Rowan, Carter, Elliott, Morgan, Bath, and Fleming. For a discussion of the region studied, reference is made to the paper on the summer birds referred to already.

During the course of the study many specimens were taken to establish identity; these were deposited in the Zoology Museum of Morehead State College. Nomenclature follows that of Peterson (A FIELD GUIDE TO THE BIRDS, 1947), which includes the changes in the A. O. U. Checklist.

Gavia immer immer. Common Loon. Specimens have been obtained on December 1 and February 18 and 23. It is an occasional winter resident.

Podilymbus podiceps podiceps. Pied-billed Grebe. A common migrant. The earliest spring records for seven years fall between March 30 and April 26. Fall records are from October 12 to November 1.

Ardea herodias herodias. Great Blue Heron. An occasional winter resident. We have no spring records later than April 26. Our earliest fall record is September 3.

Casmerodius albus egretta. American Egret. Recorded regularly in late July and in August, July 30 to August 20.

Florida coerulea coerulea. Little Blue Heron. Occasionally seen in late summer. A specimen was collected from a flock of five on August 20.

Nycticorax nycticorax hoactli. Black-crowned Night Heron. We have but 5 records for the species, from March 27 to May 8. A specimen was taken at Elliottville, Rowan County, on April 15, 1940.

Botaurus lentiginosus. American Bittern. Recorded in

the spring from April 21 to May 4 and in the fall on October 9 and November 15. Rare migrant.

Ixobrychus exilis exilis. Eastern Least Bittern. Recorded only on April 24, 1936. This is a sight record by a student of Dr. Welter and is subject to question.

Branta canadensis canadensis. Canada Goose. Our spring records are from March 9 to April 17; fall records are from October 29 to November 15.

Anas platyrhynchos platyrhynchos. Common Mallard. Occasional winter resident on the larger streams in the area. Our latest spring record is for April 16; our earliest fall record, October 3.

Dafila acuta tzitzihua. American Pintail. Occasionally seen during the fall migration in late October and early November.

Anas discors. Blue-winged Teal. We have recorded this species from March 28 to May 6; on the latter date a specimen was taken at Grayson, Carter County.

Spatula clypeata. Shoveller. Recorded from April 12 to May 4.

Aythya collaris. Ring-necked Duck. A single specimen was collected on Lewis Pond on November 1, 1935. Our spring records are from March 28 to April 20.

Aythya affinis. Lesser Scaup Duck. Recorded in the spring from March 29 to May 17.

Glaucionetta albeola. Buffle-head. A single record, by a student, on April 13, on Triplett Creek.

Erismatura jamaicensis rubida. Ruddy Duck. Two specimens collected at Lewis Pond on November 22, 1935.

Lophodytes cucullatus. Hooded Merganser. A single sight record by Dr. Welter on Slate Creek in Bath County on March 10.

Mergus merganser americanus. American Merganser. Spring records from March 8 to April 1.

Buteo lineatus lineatus. Northern Red-shouldered Hawk. Uncommon. The only record we have is for March 7, 1936, at Carter Caves, Carter County. This is Dr. Welter's record.

Buteo platypterus platypterus. Broad-winged Hawk. All our spring records are between March 7 and April 28. We have one fall record for October 25.

Haliaeetus leucocephalus leucocephalus. Southern Bald Eagle. We have several spring records from March 15 to April 26.

Circus cyaneus hudsonius. Marsh Hawk. This species is a regular and common winter resident. Our latest spring record is March 28.

Pandion haliaetus carolinensis. Osprey. A specimen of this species was collected in Morehead on May 14.

Rallus limicola limicola. Virginia Rail. A rare migrant. Our only record is for 1939, when two birds were seen by me in a marsh near Morehead.

Porzana carolina. Sora Rail. This species is a rare migrant. Individuals observed from April 28 to May 9 and August 25 to September 25.

Fulica americana americana. American Coot. An occasional spring and fall migrant. We have records for October and for May 21 and 30.

Arenaria interpres morinella. Ruddy Turnstone. A single individual was observed on a flat hotel roof in Morehead on September 4. This is Dr. Welter's record; no further details are available.

Capella gallinago delicata. Wilson's Snipe. This species is a regular migrant and occasional winter resident. Most of the birds are observed about the middle of March, but they have been recorded as late as April 29.

Actitis macularia. Spotted Sandpiper. A common spring migrant. We have spring records from April 15 to May 26.

Tringa solitaria solitaria. Eastern Solitary Sandpiper. A regular migrant. Spring dates are from April 11 to May 18.

Totanus melanoleucus. Greater Yellow-legs. Several of these birds were observed on May 19, 1937, at Gearhart Pond. This is a sight record by Dr. Welter.

Totanus flavipes. Lesser Yellow-legs. Observed on April 25, 1938, at Gearhart Pond, near Morehead, by Dr. Welter.

Erolia minutilla. Least Sandpiper. A rather rare migrant. I took two specimens from a flock of five near the city of Morehead on May 18, 1938. We have one other record for May 19, 1937, at Gearhart Pond.

Asio flammeus flammeus. Short-eared Owl. A rare winter resident. A female was collected near Morehead on November 10, 1937.

Aegolius acadica acadica. Saw-whet Owl. A rare winter resident. We have one record, a female, collected near Morehead on October 21, 1939.

Caprimulgus carolinensis. Chuck-will's-widow. Our only record is a voice record during the spring of 1939.

Sphyrapicus varius varius. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker. A common winter resident. Our latest spring record is May 30.

Empidonax flaviventris. Yellow-bellied Flycatcher. A rare migrant. We have only two records: one on May 9, 1934, the other on May 12, 1937—both sight records by Dr. Welter.

Empidonax minimus. Least Flycatcher. A rare migrant. Our spring records for five years are from May 2 to May 15.

Iridoprocne bicolor. Tree Swallow. A rare migrant. Our records for four years range from April 21 to May 4.

Riparia riparia riparia. Bank Swallow. Fairly common migrant. Our records for seven years are from April 4 to April 25.

Sitta canadensis. Red-breasted Nuthatch. A rare winter resident. We have a student record for March 6, 1936. Dr. Welter saw one individual at Rodburn, Rowan County, on April 24, 1936.

Certhia familiaris americana. Brown Creeper. A fairly rare winter resident. Our records for six years are between January 6 and April 8.

Troglodytes aedon. House Wren. A rare migrant. All our records are between April 4 and May 1.

Troglodytes troglodytes hiemalis. Eastern Winter Wren. A fairly common winter resident. Our latest spring record is March 29.

Hylocichla guttata faxoni. Eastern Hermit Thrush. A fairly common winter resident. Our latest spring record is May 2.

Hylocichla ustulata swainsoni. Eastern Olive-backed Thrush. A fairly common migrant. Our latest spring record is May 17.

Hylocichla minima. Gray-cheeked Thrush. A fairly common migrant. Our spring records are between April 24 and May 20.

Hylocichla fuscescens fuscescens. Veery. A rare migrant. Specimens have been taken at Morehead.

Regulus satrapa satrapa. Eastern Golden-crowned Kinglet. A common winter resident. Our latest spring record for seven years is April 19.

Regulus calendula calendula. Eastern Ruby-crowned

Kinglet. A common migrant. All our records for seven years are between March 5 and April 24.

Anthus spinoletta rubescens. American Pipit. A fairly common migrant. All our records are near March 10 and September 21.

Vireo solitarius solitarius. Blue-headed Vireo. A rare migrant. We have records on May 7 and 8 and October 8.

Vireo philadelphicus. Philadelphia Vireo. A very rare migrant, according to Dr. Welter; I have no further data.

Vermivora chrysoptera. Golden-winged Warbler. A very rare migrant. We have three sight records, all between April 30 and May 10—two by Dr. Welter, one by me.

Vermivora peregrina. Tennessee Warbler. A rare migrant. Dr. Welter had records for April 26 and 27 and May 13.

Vermivora celata celata. Orange-crowned Warbler. A rare migrant. Dr. Welter had a record for April 25. Robert Mengel has called my attention to the fact that he examined an apparently immature specimen in the collection at Morehead taken on October 8, 1937.

Vermivora ruficapilla ruficapilla. Nashville Warbler. A rare migrant. We have three years of records from April 25 to May 1.

Dendroica magnolia. Magnolia Warbler. A common migrant. We have records for seven years between April 22 and May 24.

Dendroica tigrina. Cape May Warbler. A common migrant. We have records for five years from April 25 to May 9.

Dendroica caerulescens caerulescens. Black-throated Blue Warbler. A rare migrant. We have spring records for three years from April 24 to May 9.

Dendroica coronata coronata. Myrtle Warbler. A common migrant. We have several spring records, for seven years, between April 3 and May 4.

Dendroica virens virens. Black-throated Green Warbler. A common migrant. All our seven years of spring records are between April 4 and April 24. We have one fall record for October 1.

Dendroica fusca. Blackburnian Warbler. A common migrant. Our four years of spring records are from April 28 to May 9.

Dendroica pensylvanica. Chestnut-sided Warbler. A

common migrant. Our five years of spring records are from May 1 to 12.

Dendroica castanea. Bay-breasted Warbler. A common migrant. We have seven years of spring records from April 19 to May 16.

Dendroica striata. Black-poll Warbler. A common migrant. We have five years of spring records between April 30 and May 21.

Dendroica palmarum palmarum. Western Palm Warbler. A rare migrant. Our three records are between April 26 and May 13. Two of these are student records. Dr. Welter recorded the species on April 26, 1933, at Farmers, Rowan County.

Seiurus noveboracensis noveboracensis. Northern Water-thrush. A rare migrant. Our only record is for April 2, a sight record by Dr. Welter.

Oporornis agilis. Connecticut Warbler. A very rare migrant. We have four records between April 24 and May 3: two by students, two by Dr. Welter.

Wilsonia pusilla pusilla. Wilson's Warbler. A rare migrant. Our two records are on May 14 and 17, both questionable student records.

Dolichonyx oryzivorus. Bobolink. A fairly rare migrant. Our six years of spring records are between April 28 and May 24.

Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus. Yellow-headed Blackbird. A rare migrant. Our only record is for April 12, 1933, when a flock was observed near Clearfield, Rowan County. This record was made by Dr. Welter, who knew this species intimately in his native Minnesota.

Euphagus carolinus. Rusty Blackbird. A fairly common migrant. Our spring records fall between March 24 and April 9.

Euphagus cyanocephalus. Brewer's Blackbird. A rare migrant. Dr. Welter observed this species at Morehead on April 9, 1934.

Pheucticus ludovicianus. Rose-breasted Grosbeak. A fairly rare migrant. Our spring records are for late April and early May.

Carpodacus purpureus purpureus. Eastern Purple Finch. A rare winter resident. During the severe winter of 1939-'40 numbers of these birds were observed within the city limits of Morehead. I have also collected this species in Morehead.

Spinus pinus pinus. Pine Siskin. A very rare winter resident. Our only record is a sight record by Dr. Welter on April 9.

Passerculus sandwichensis savanna. Eastern Savannah Sparrow. A common migrant and occasional winter resident. Our latest spring record is May 5.

Poocetes gramineus gramineus. Eastern Vesper Sparrow. A rare migrant. Our spring records for four years are between March 21 and April 15.

Junco hyemalis hyemalis. Slate-colored Junco. A common winter resident.

Spizella arborea arborea. Eastern Tree Sparrow. A fairly common winter resident. Our latest spring date is March 29.

Zonotrichia leucophrys leucophrys. White-crowned Sparrow. A common migrant and occasional winter resident. Our latest spring date is May 12; our earliest fall date, October 1.

Zonotrichia albicollis. White-throated Sparrow. A common winter resident. Our latest spring date is April 24.

Passerella iliaca iliaca. Eastern Fox Sparrow. A rather rare winter resident. Our latest spring date is April 11.

Melospiza lincolni lincolni. Lincoln's Sparrow. A fairly common migrant. Our earliest spring record is March 28.

Melospiza georgiana georgiana. Eastern Swamp Sparrow. A fairly common winter resident. Our latest spring date is April 27; our earliest fall date, October 24.

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BARBOUR, ROGER

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BIRDS IN AND AROUND AUDUBON MUSEUM, NEAR HENDERSON, KENTUCKY

ETHEL OATES SHELTON, Museum Curator

Those of you who do not know Audubon Museum and the surrounding park have missed a rare treat indeed. The beautiful gray stone building which houses the museum collection crowns a low hill near the center of the park. The

bird paintings by John James Audubon which it contains are worth traveling many miles to see.

The surrounding park is a heavily wooded area containing two lakes and inhabited by a varied and interesting collection of small wild life. It is also near the junction of three or more bird flyways in the north-south migration, all of which brings many naturalists, and just plain bird-lovers, to us during the year.

Those who have been here before, on entering the museum, immediately go to the south window, where our bird feeding station is located. Almost any time of the year and any time of the day something pleasant is taking place outside that window. Our Christmas Bird Count by the local chapter of the Kentucky Ornithological Society gave us 87 kinds of birds wintering with us in this immediate section; sometimes we think we surely must have most of them in the park. It is not at all unusual to see 10 or 15 varieties feeding at one time. What a pity that people will not live together as peacefully as do most birds! Almost all the woodpeckers eat with us; our smallest visitor is the Brown Creeper; and there are many kinds of sparrows. Flocks of Robins come, but not to the feeder. Cardinals we have the year round, of course, and the warblers make life pleasant in the spring. A flight of Prothonotary Warblers stopped one day in migration. Every little yellow head was turned in the same direction, and one barely had time to gasp with delight at the beauty of them before they were gone. A tree full of Prothonotary Warblers is an unforgettable sight.

A recent visitor at the feeding station was an opossum. He walked around on the ground, sampled some of the food and more of the tree limbs as he tried to get into the feeder but failed. Then he parked himself about halfway up the tree and sat there for hours and watched the cavalcade of diners below. They did not seem to be at all interested in him or disturbed. The tree mentioned is a very thorny crab apple whose limbs and thorns hold many pieces of bread and suet for the birds. Every morning finds all that was left carefully cleared away by the small animals of the night. Squirrels do not wait until night; they come and carry away all they can during the day. The birds are our first love, but squirrels run them a close second, not to mention rabbits and funny little groundhogs.

Another interesting animal, with a den almost under the museum, is, we think, a hybrid fox. He casually lay outside the den one day and let us look at him for a long

time. His face and body were gray, but the back of his head and his ears were very red.

All the creatures are interesting, even the predatory ones, and Nature keeps her balance if only man will let her. Eagles are predatory, but it is a very thrilling sight to see an occasional eagle fly over the park, with its nest not too far away.

Altogether, life at the museum is very pleasant. Come and make us a visit, all you who love wildlife in a natural setting.

FIELD NOTES

A QUAIL WITH AN IMPACTED CROP

On October 13, 1951, John Cheek captured by hand a female Bobwhite (*Colinus v. virginiana*) in the Grampian Hills Refuge near Madisonville, Hopkins County, Kentucky, and brought it to me for examination. The bird, with no apparent physical injuries, was extremely emaciated and unable to fly, even for a few feet. Examination revealed the presence of two hard, yellow, cheesy masses in the crop, each oval in shape and about one-half by three-quarters of an inch in size. Numerous seeds were imbedded in the surface of the masses, and a smaller number were interspersed throughout. No further abnormal conditions were observed. Obviously, the bird could not have survived more than a day or two longer.—ROGER W. BARBOUR, Lexington.

* * * * *

A VERY EARLY MOURNING DOVE

On March 18, 1952, as I was walking across our campus to my office, I scared up from the ground two immature Mourning Doves (*Zenaidura macroura*). They flew, with great difficulty, to the lowest limb of an old pine tree and seemed very little afraid as I reached out my hand and almost touched them. The next day one of the two had disappeared; I did not see the remaining one after March 19. This is far the earliest record I have ever had for young Doves out of the nest.—GORDON WILSON, Bowling Green.

* * * * *

GOLDEN PLOVERS AT McELROY LAKE

In 1935, 1937, 1942—widely separated as they are—I recorded the Golden Plover. But all my records pale beside the one for March 26, 1952, when I watched for many minutes a flock of 26 go through their marvelous evolutions of flight, now high in the air, now down so low that their wings almost touched the plowed ground. Many of the birds gave their distinctive note, a sort of sublimated song of the Greater Yellow-legs. From where I stood I saw, first and last, the flock from every angle; once they swept so low that I could see their backs plainly. None were in complete spring plumage so far as their underparts were concerned, but their backs were unmistakable, as were their wings and flight and song. I have seldom had a more thrilling twenty minutes of watching this aerial demonstration of the spirit of the flock.—GORDON WILSON, Bowling Green.

ANNUAL SPRING MEETING

The annual luncheon and spring meeting of the Kentucky Ornithological Society was held in the Mulberry Room of the Henry Clay Hotel, Louisville, at noon, April 18, 1952. Miss Virginia Smith, the president, in opening the program, reported that she and Mrs. S. Charles Thacher, the secretary-treasurer, in the current membership campaign had sent out 200 letters to prospective members and that our present membership is 240.

Mrs. Thacher reported \$264.17 in the treasury, adding that some issues of the WARBLER remain to be paid for.

The fall meeting committee, of which Miss Evelyn J. Schneider was chairman, suggested Natural Bridge State Park as the meeting place. As the lodge at the park was closed at the time of our spring meeting, the exact date will have to be set later, after the lodge opens for the season. Preliminary announcements will be sent our members, if possible, before they go away on their summer vacations.

Mr. W. P. Rhoads, of Henderson, asked how a bird census should be conducted. Dr. Harvey Lovell answered by saying that our society has always followed the plans used by the National Audubon Society.

Reports from various regions showed that much interest is being developed in ornithology in the state. Miss Eugenia Lair said that progress was being made toward forming a K. O. S. chapter at Cynthiana and that she had rounded up ten interested members. Mr. Rhoads reported that the Henderson chapter has scheduled six bird walks and one joint meeting with the Madisonville group. Twenty of the Henderson group are members of the K. O. S. Dr. Roger Barbour, of Lexington, reported that his group had a spring bird count and had participated in the Audubon Screen Tour. Mrs. Anne Stamm reported that the Louisville chapter supplies speakers on ornithology to various groups as requested. Regular field trips are made and the Falls of the Ohio studied from August to December. The group plans a breeding bird census this year and has had the Audubon Screen Tours for eight years. Two wildlife conferences each year are held at Otter Creek. A conservation project is being carried out to the extent of leasing some land in order to protect the nesting sites of rails, egrets, and other water species. Money-making schemes carried on are sales of bird stationery and feeders. Louisville had one general dinner meeting this year. The Murray report, sent in by Miss Grace Wyatt, who was unable to be present, indicated that some excellent interest in ornithology is being shown in Murray State College, especially by the classes in Field Biology. Mr. Bert Powell reported that there are now seven members at Owensboro, who hope to have a chapter soon.

Thanks were expressed for the efficient work done by Mrs. Fan Tabler and Miss Audrey Wright in providing for the annual luncheon.

Following the luncheon came the afternoon program. The fourth grade from Emmett Field School, Miss Louise Reager, teacher, discussed birds' bills and their relation to the type of food used. The Valley High School Science Club showed some interesting silhouettes of birds and stressed the importance of recognizing the bird by his shape and form. Some interesting booklets were also exhibited. Mrs. Harvey Lovell and Miss Harriet Korfhage were the leaders of this group. Dr. Gordon Wilson mentioned several riddles of bird life

in Kentucky that should challenge ornithologists. The main feature of the program was an illustrated lecture on "Teaching Nature and Conservation by Student Projects," by Mr. Rex A. Conyers, University City Public Schools, University City, Missouri. A feature of his address was the playing of tape recordings of bird songs while pictures or posters were shown.

The Saturday morning hike left Cherokee Park at 7:30 and remained in the field until noon. The highlight of the finds was six yellow-crowned Night Herons.—AMY DEANE, Recording Secretary.

* * * * *

NEW MEMBERS SINCE OUR LAST LIST, NOVEMBER, 1951

* Indicates that the member was once associated with the K. O. S.

- *Bagian, Mrs. Edna, 260 North 41st Street, Louisville.
- Benge, Mrs. Mabel, High School, Waco.
- *Bergman, Amy, 209 University Avenue, Lexington.
- Boone, Sister Rose Anne, Calvary School, R. 1, Lebanon.
- Bradshaw, Professor A. S., Transylvania College, Lexington.
- Bullock, Dr. Waller, 200 Market Street, Lexington.
- Bullock, Mrs. Waller, 200 Market Street, Lexington.
- Burns, Mrs. G. L., 1919 Northern Parkway, Lexington.
- Cole, Mrs. Helen, 1746 Sulgrove Road, Louisville.
- Dancey, Mrs. Robert J., State T. B. Hospital, Madisonville.
- Denton, Robert, Todd Road, R. 7, Lexington.
- Donoho, Donnie, R. 1, Box 368, Pleasure Ridge.
- Ernst, Mrs. R. C., 3315 Oriole Road, Louisville 13.
- Ewing, Frank S., Box 54, Mammoth Cave.
- Ford, Joseph, R. 5, Owensboro.
- Friddy, Wilfred E., 2002 Frankfort Avenue, Louisville.
- Furber, Alice, 404 North Race Street, Glasgow.
- *Furnish, Dr. William, University of Louisville, Louisville.
- Garland, Mrs. H. H., R. 3, Owensboro.
- Gates, John, 2114 Kenilworth, Louisville.
- Grant, Jimmie, R. 1, Box 377, Pleasure Ridge.
- Hannegan, Irene, 1324 Ninth Street, Pomona, California.
- *Hardaway, Howard, 4625 Southern Parkway, Louisville.
- *Hays, Rodney M., 115 Headley Avenue, Lexington.
- Henderson Public Library, Henderson.
- Henderson, Mrs. E. L., 87 Valley Road, Louisville.
- *Hickman, Mrs. Baylor C., Glenview.
- Horneman, Alice, 1004 Everett Avenue, Louisville.
- Houk, Tommie, Russell Springs.
- *King, Virgil D., R. 8, Box 402, Dayton, Ohio.
- *Kozee, Ercel, Willard.
- Kramer, Mrs. Raymond, R. 2, Browns Valley, Utica.
- Levinson, Daniel, 950 East 29th Street, Chicago, Illinois.
- Lewis, Mrs. Elizabeth, 2320 Hale Avenue, Louisville.
- Livesay, Ann, 1712 South Limestone, Lexington.
- Lyne, Mrs. T. L., 254 S. Hanover, Lexington.
- Martin, William C., Y. M. C. A., Third and Broadway, Louisville.
- Mehr, Mrs. Stella L., 1402 Kentucky Hotel, % Mrs. White, Louisville.
- Mercer, Forrest, 401 Maple Avenue, Owensboro.
- *Morrell, C. K., 119 East Maxwell, Lexington.
- Palmore, Mrs. Robert, R. 2, Box 527, Louisville.
- Pennington, James, Webbville.

- Peterson, Mrs. S., 145 E. Wellington, Louisville.
Putnam, Dr. L. S., B & Z Building, Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio.
Richards, Miss E. H., 3306 Illinois Avenue, Louisville.
Roberts, Bess, 330 North 27th, Louisville.
Robertson, David, 125 Elm Park, Lexington.
Shacklette, Dr. W. J., Hodgenville.
Shanklin, James H., Mayslick.
*Simpson, Mrs. Eugene, 203 East 4th Street, Lexington.
Steen, Edwin, Gamaliel.
Thornbury, Mrs. Harry, 308 West Eighth, Box 99, Owensboro.
True, John W., 1925 S. Third, Louisville.
Unsel, James, Jr., Gravel Switch.
U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Washington, D. C.
Vogel, Edna, 1040 Elm Street, Henderson.
Webster, Dr. Dan J., Hanover College, Hanover, Indiana.
Wheeler, Mrs. S. E., Kirksville.

NEWS AND VIEWS

STUDIES OF NOCTURNAL BIRD MIGRATION IN KENTUCKY

In the spring of 1948, two groups of observers in Kentucky directed telescopes at the moon to obtain counts of migrating birds. One group, directed by Charles Strull, operated at Louisville; the other, under the leadership of Grace Wyatt, worked at Murray. Their activities were part of a nationwide investigation of nocturnal bird migration sponsored by the Louisiana State University Museum of Zoology, where the counts were analyzed mathematically and expressed as flight densities (the number of birds per hour per mile of front passing in each direction). The comparison of many quantities so arrived at, representing the migration on different dates, in different hours, and at different places, led to several surprising conclusions. These have been discussed in a recent paper by George H. Lowery, Jr. ("A Quantitative Study of the Nocturnal Migration of Birds," University of Kansas Publications, Museum of Natural History, vol. 3, no. 2, pp. 361-472).

The maximum hourly station density (birds per mile of front in all directions) at Louisville was 5000 birds. That at Murray was 3700 birds. But both stations were equal in their average hourly station densities, which amounted to 2000 birds. The Louisville maximum was the fourth highest for April among the figures from 30 stations scattered over the North American continent, and Louisville and Murray were tied for fourth place in average density. These facts indicate that Kentucky lies on a major nocturnal migration route and that it should play a leading role in the night migration researches of the future.

A second cooperative study, similar to the first but still wider in scope, is being staged in the fall of 1952. It is hoped that in this effort the stations at Louisville and Murray will be joined by others in Kentucky. The more numerous the localities where observations are being made, the more interesting are the comparisons that can be drawn, and the more dependable the conclusions that can be reached.

The observational procedure is an extremely simple one requiring no previous experience. Anyone who has access to a small telescope, or a large one, can participate. Interested persons are urged to write at once for further details to Robert J. Newman, at the Museum of Zoology, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, La., where the data will be mathematically processed.

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STARLINGS NOT AFRAID OF OWLS

The LOUISVILLE TIMES for December 8, 1951, carried a picture of the Strand Theatre Building, 226 West Chestnut Street, Louisville, practically covered up with Starlings, some of them actually roosting on the metal owls that had been erected to scare them off.

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HENDERSON CHAPTER, KENTUCKY ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Our field trips are planned ahead of time, and every member is mailed well in advance a list containing the time, place, date, and leader. Places are selected and times set in keeping with what our past experience has shown to be good seasons. We usually start the last weekend in March and end with the "Spring Count" and annual meeting of the chapter (election of officers) on the last Sunday in April. Last year one of our field trips was to Madisonville with Mr. B. C. Bacon as our guide and host, with visits to Mr. Bacon's Museum of Oology and also to Grampian Hills. Another of our spring walks was devoted to the instruction of children and young people who had been especially invited through the schools. The attendance averaged nearly fifty for the six outings last year. So far the number participating this year has been much greater.

The activities of the summer are largely a matter of individual enterprise. Of course, if something new has developed, there are a lot of busy signals on a lot of telephones.

Our membership drive starts in September and keeps that committee busy for a few weeks, but those who work on it say that it is a pleasure, for they enjoy these informal visits with people of like interests.

The winter program consisted of two screen tour lectures, Maslowski and Furgeson, together with a series of slides by Mr. Coopridge of Evansville, Indiana, which he calls "Autumn Colors." We are contracted for three screen tour lectures for the coming season and had a membership of 243 at the close of the winter season.

Our president, Miss Virginia Smith, who is also K. O. S. president, appeared before three woman's clubs and two garden clubs, with messages pertaining to bird life. She also spoke to two farm bureau locals on conservation.

The Christmas census is rather complete, for we have active members who live in or near all classes of habitat, from windswept hills through the flatlands that never overflow to the lowest sloughs and river bottoms.

As stated at the beginning, we are full of enthusiasm.—W. P. RHOADS, Henderson.

Footnote to Mr. Rhoads's report: The Henderson Chapter of the K. O. S. held a big outing on April 27, 1952, with approximately fifty people participating from Owensboro, Madisonville, Evansville, Dixon, Henderson, and even four from South Bend, Indiana. The group met

at the lakeside shelter house in Audubon State Park for lunch and spent the afternoon in the park.

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EARLY MIGRANTS

I find the birds are showing up from one to nine days earlier this year than they ever have before, according to my records. The Whip-poor-will came on April 11, as against April 29 last year; the Chimney Swift came on April 19, one day earlier than usual; the Yellow Warbler on April 18, six days early; and the Wood Thrush on April 22, four days early.—DR. C. F. MOUSER, Evarts.

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JUNIOR ACADEMY AWARD

The annual award to the best Junior Academy of Science Christmas census was awarded to the club of Valley High School, of which Mrs. Ethel Lovell is the sponsor. This award is \$5.00 and a year's subscription to the KENTUCKY WARBLER.

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WRENS AND SKULLS

My husband's father, Dr. W. W. Hobson, graduated in 1885 from Hospital College of Medicine in Louisville, now the University of Louisville Medical College. It was the custom then for each student to own a human body, which was usually purchased before death from some indigent person at the City Hospital. When Dr. Hobson moved to his home at Harrod's Creek in 1888, he hung the skull on the back porch. Each year a wren built in it. (Ed.: probably a Bewick's). The house was broken up in 1945, and the youngest son asked for the skull for his home in Indiana. Other wrens came to it in his garage at Petersburg, Indiana, so that the skull has been a wren home for sixty-four years. We have always planned to send this to "Believe it or Not."—MRS. RANDOLPH L. HOBSON, Henderson.

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RED-HEADED WOODPECKERS IN WINTER OF 1951-'52

In the winter of 1950-51, I did not record the Red-headed Woodpecker from August 10 to April 30, But in 1951-52 I could find from two to eight in several parts of my territory. In every instance they were in or near stands of oaks.—GORDON WILSON, Bowling Green.